

Correspondence.

IMPROVED FLUES V. CLIMBING BOYS.

SIR,—The very able and humane remarks which appeared in your leading article of June 8th, with regard to chimneys, have led me to consider how necessary it is that the formation of flues generally should be such as to preclude the possibility of using the living machine for cleansing them. The usual rectangular form of flue is just sufficient to allow this inhuman and degrading practice to be exercised; and although most flues are at present so constructed, legislative enactment prevents the use of climbing-boys; but it is possible that there may at some future time be a repeal of the Act, so highly creditable to the present age. It is therefore incumbent on those connected with building to turn their serious attention to the formation of flues, and if they can substitute a more scientific form for the transit of smoke, combination of strength, and facility of cleansing by machinery, and consequent safety from the effects of ignition, I say they will act, not only from the most humane principles, but also do that which will add far more to the health, comfort, and safety of the community at large, than any legislative enactment can do, as applied to so very important a feature in our dwellings, and which has, I am sorry to say, received very little attention from scientific men.

Mr. Hunt, Mr. Seth Smith, and a few others, have, I believe, taken out patents for the construction of flues of a circular form, which most scientific men would consider adapted to their several purposes better than a square flue. The former flue was of brick, and although its construction was extremely clever, all bond was destroyed, and its interior being glazed, there was no adhesion for the soot, which frequently descended *en masse*; moreover, this mode was very expensive. The other plan was one which is alluded to in your number dated 15th inst., in a letter signed Edward Nangle; this was the application of metallic tubes for the purposes of a lining to the flues, also a most expensive plan, and one that might be extremely detrimental to a building by expansion and contraction, and lead generally to very careless workmanship. I have given some attention to the matter, and am of opinion that a flue should be of a circular section and constructed of bricks, which should be moulded to that form, and so fashioned as to bond in perfectly with the general work; and that the interior of the flue should not be glazed or pargetted, but be worked as fairly as possible, and be well flushed up to prevent the escape of smoke; and I really cannot imagine there would be much more expense than on the present plan. I hope you will excuse me for troubling you with these observations, but feel assured, from your observations on the subject, that you would feel disposed to assist any of your readers in the advocacy of those principles, which are an honour to the age in which we live.

PHILANTHROPY.

COMPETITION.

SIR,—I observed in the *THE BUILDER* of Saturday last, some very excellent remarks on the immoral practice of competition, and I do hope that, you having now declared yourself a most unqualified enemy to this vicious system, every exertion in your power will be used to wipe away this stain from the "scutcheon" of architects and builders.

The system operates as much to the injury of the employer as the employed, by creating a disposition on the part of the latter to take unfair advantages of the want of judgment in the authors of plans, to make up for deficiency of profit, and is also a premium on dishonesty, as the sharpest trader and the man of no principle generally fares best, from his determination at the outset of his contract to substitute bad materials, bad work, and, if possible, to seduce the clerk-of-works to connive at his conduct.

The present system also widens the breach that unfortunately has, for the last few years, taken place between the middle and working classes, as it gives a species of monopoly to a few capitalists to concentrate in themselves all the different branches of art connected with building, and keeps the workman to his *caste* or *class*, whatever may be his genius. A work-

man, whether a carpenter, or a joiner, a mason, or a bricklayer, however gifted, unless he can obtain capital to unite all these and many other trades under the denomination of builder, must never hope to be independent of servitude, or become, as of old, a master. He may become a drudge—a task-master—a tool of the great builder, but he will never be the respectable, substantial master that was commonly known forty years ago. Neither can it be expected that the same advance will be made in different branches of building while this system prevails. How can a contracting, competition builder feel that interest and pride in his work which the old master mechanics used to feel? It is impossible; it is contrary to his mode of doing business, which is cheapness; it is sufficient for him that the work obtains the architect's certificate. Moreover, the present system is the worst possible for training youth to any one of the building arts, as there is no emulation, nor proper master to direct his taste and ability.

I have had great opportunities, possibly greater than most men, of observing the changes which have taken place during the last five-and-twenty years amongst those whose trade is connected with building, and the amount of ruin and utter destitution I have witnessed among men who were once respectable master carpenters, bricklayers, masons, and plasterers of the old school,—men, who have tried to meet the new order of things, and bear up against this accursed system, has been pitiable in the extreme, have yet been crushed by its harshness and knavery. Ask any commercial traveller, who sells building-materials, to look at his journey-book, and let him tell you how many names he can point out of those who have retained their business on the new system? He will tell you that it will be more easy to recount those that have ended their days in a gaol, and whose families become paupers, in the attempt to live by "competition;" and he may tell you some tales on this score not much to the credit of members of that institution, which you seem not to respect more than others.

Your remarks in reference to competition for building churches are but too true. I venture to assert that there is not a county in England, where churches have been built on this system, in which some have not been cursed by the builders, as the origin of their ruin.

Roman Catholics are not exempt on this score, and I do hope that Welby Pugin, who, in good round terms, rates architects as parer-down of tradesmen's accounts, will lend his aid in crushing this system, and prevent, in the erection of Roman Catholic buildings, such circumstances taking place as a few years ago attended the erection of the new Roman Catholic buildings at Bury St. Edmunds and Hereford.

Surely no Christian would wish that the altar of his God should be raised in envy,

malice, and all uncharitableness; and that some of the earliest prayers whispered at its foot should be a cry for bread from the wife and children of the ruined and broken-hearted man, who literally placed the material head and corner-stone of the temple, and whose distress was occasioned by the integrity with which he fulfilled his bond.

Much of the sin lies at the door of architects, much also at that of "the builders" themselves: but let both unite in getting rid of this disgraceful mode of transacting business, and they will confer an incalculable benefit on the arts. And, I am sure, when this has been effected, that no branch of manufactures or arts will keep pace with the advances that will then be made in architecture, and in those arts which it calls to its aid.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,
London, 24th June, 1844.

DERBY LUNATIC ASYLUM.

SIR,—I perceive you have not received any notice respecting the result of the competition for the Derby County Lunatic Asylum. There were seventy-nine designs sent in, consisting of more than 800 drawings, some very elaborately got up.

The design chosen, and which it is intended to carry into execution forthwith, was sent in by Mr. Henry Duesbury, late of the firm of Lee and Duesbury, 20, Golden-square, London; it is certainly a very excellent plan, far superior to all the others sent in—so much so, that the committee did not even divide, but were unanimous for its adoption. Messrs. Lee and Duesbury were the successful competitors for the Derby Town Hall, which is now finished from their designs; it has a commanding elevation, and the plan is very convenient, and well adapted to the purpose intended. If a plan and elevation should be of service to your useful publication, I will, with pleasure, send it, to the proper scale.

It is lamentable to see the great expense that young architects put themselves to in competing: some of the designs sent in had very large and elaborate drawings, executed in the first style, by Mackenzie and other artists, framed and glazed. This would be all very well, did it only concern themselves; but this is not the case; it compels those, who would only otherwise attend to the designing a good building, to employ artists and make large drawings, or they stand no chance of attracting attention when the designs are exhibited for approval.

With good wishes for the success of your useful publication,

I am Sir, your obedient servant,

A SUBSCRIBER.

Derby, June 19, 1844.

DESIGNS FOR ARTICLES RELATING TO ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, &c.

Registered under 6th & 7th Vic., cap. 65.

Date of Register, 1845.	No. in Register.	Proprietor's Name.	Address.	Subject.
APRIL 29	173	William Glegg Glover.	8, Chester-square, Mid-dlesex.	Design for window-sashes.
— 30	174	Green and Bentley.	33, Compton-st., Bruns-wick-square, London.	The Protcan reflecting oven.
MAY 3	177	Robert Fry.	Tockington, Gloucester-shire.	Design for the configura-tion of a bed, or a floor for thrashing grain and seeds, and for breaking stones and other matter.
— 4	178	David Middleton, Jun.	Lincoln.	Chimney-pot and cowl-sweeper.
— 8	179	Isaac Luggitt.	Howden, County York.	Design for a new lamp for burning spirit.
— 11	180	Wm. and Joseph Har-court	209, Bristol-street, Bir-mingham.	Harcourt's sliding blind pulley.
— —	181	George Thos. Caswell.	Wolverhampton, Staf-fordshire.	A double-acting pump.
— —	182	Vincent Price.	Wardour-street, Soho.	Design for a manouuvre carriage.
— 14	183	William Warne.	Lark-hall-lane, Clapham.	Cordwainer's standing or sitting machine.
— 15	184	Benjamin Hick and So.	Bolton, Lancashire.	Design for a portable forge.
— —	185	H. Negretti.	19, Leather-lane, Lon-don.	Thermo-hydrometer.